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**Reps. Waxman and Markey and 60 Members of Congress Call on President Bush to
Require Passenger Automobiles to be More Energy Efficient**

WASHINGTON, DC — Today Rep. Henry A. Waxman, Rep. Edward J. Markey, and 60 members of Congress wrote to President Bush to request that he “take immediate action to increase the corporate average fuel economy (CAFE) standards for cars and trucks.”

On April 27, 2006, the President incorrectly stated that he did not have authority to raise automobile fuel efficiency standards, and requested that Congress grant him the authority. Specifically, the President said:

Congress is debating some other ideas. And one idea is to give me a capacity to raise CAFE standards on automobiles. I encourage them to give me that authority. It's authority that I use for light trucks. And I intend to use it wisely if Congress would give me that authority.¹

In fact, 49 U.S.C. 32902(c) provides the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) with explicit authority to revise CAFE standards for passenger automobiles. Since the President's statement, Secretary of Transportation Norman Mineta has conceded that the Administration does, in fact, have authority to increase efficiency standards.

“The President has declared that our nation is addicted to oil, yet he refuses to take concrete steps to curb that addiction,” said Rep. Waxman. “Instead of calling on Congress for new authority, the President should raise CAFE standards and set the nation on a course towards a more sustainable, secure, and cleaner future.”

“Republicans have deemed this week ‘Energy Week,’ but without even allowing a vote on increasing the fuel economy standards for cars and lights trucks, it is a total waste of energy,” said Rep. Markey. “I call on the President to use his existing authority to do what Congressional Republicans refuse to do.”

Today, the United States imports approximately 10 million barrels of oil every day to meet our energy needs. During the 2000 presidential campaign, Texas Governor George W. Bush criticized the Clinton Administration for allowing U.S. imports on foreign oil to reach 56% of U.S. oil consumption. Today, U.S. imports of foreign oil have risen to 65% of U.S. consumption.

The full text of the letter is available at www.henrywaxman.house.gov.

¹ White House, *President Discusses Refining Capacity in Biloxi, Mississippi* (Apr. 27, 2006) (online at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2006/04/20060427-12.html>.)